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By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

THURSDAY, *September* the 18th, 1755.

SINCE the publication of my correſpondent's letter on the ſubject of noiſe, I have received the two following, which I ſhall lay before my readers for the entertainment of to-day.

To Mr. FITZ-ADAM,

SIR,

YOUR paper which treats of the paſſion for noiſe, has in one reſpect given me ſome pleaſure; the obſervations in it being ſuch as I have often made myſelf, and the ridicule intended by them what many perſons in the world very juſtly deſerve. At the ſame time I could not help feeling ſome uneaſineſs, on being led by thoſe obſervations to reflect ſeriouſly and deliberately upon my own misfortunes.

TILL I was about forty years old, I had lived a batchelor in London; at which time, having acquired a comfortable fortune in the mercantile way, I retired into the country; and hoping to paſs the reſt of my days in peace, and to be happy in a ſociable companion, I married a wife. She has always been, for any thing

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that I know to the contrary, what is called a virtuous woman: a *notable* one I am ſure ſhe is: but though chaſtity and notableneſs may be very valuable qualities in a woman, yet if they are to be nurſed and cheriſhed at the expence of meekneſs, forbearance, and all the other virtues, in my humble opinion, ſhe had better be without them. I called at your friend Dodſley's, the laſt time I was in town, to look in Mr. Johnſon's dictionary for the meaning of the word *notable*; but could find no ſuch epithet applied to a wife. I wiſh with all my heart that he had given us a definition of that character, as alſo of a *good woman*, which according to ſome alehouſe ſigns in the country, is a woman without a head.

I HAVE long been of opinion, that as the principal virtue of a man is *courage*, ſo the principal virtue of a woman is *ſilence*: my wife indeed is of a contrary way of thinking, with regard to this female virtue; but till I am ſtark deaf, I ſhall never be prevailed upon to alter my opinion. Dumb creatures were always my delight, and particularly a cat, the dumbeſt of all; but my wife, who has a natural antipathy to that animal, has hung up a parrot in the parlour, and filled my hen-yard and garden with maccaws and peacocks.

BESIDES the domeſtic noiſes with which I am perpetually tormented, I am unfortunately ſituated near the church, and in the hearing of ten diſmal bells, which our pariſhioners have ſet up, in the room of one ſingle bell, by which for many years before, the proper notice for church-time, and other parochial matters had been uſually given. And leſt the advantage of the ſound of theſe bells ſhould ever be loſt, one of our wealthy yeomen has bequeathed by will a conſiderable ſum of money to the ringers of the pariſh, for ringing a certain number of peals five or ſix times a week for ever. About the time of this

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deſirable acquiſition, the new method of pſalmody was introduced into our church, by a ſet of fellows who call themſelves the ſingers: ſo that our good old tunes being rejected, I am obliged to ſit and hear their terrible bawling and diſcord, having never been taught to ſing in treble time, or to find any thing ſolemn in the airs of a jigg.

It happens alſo that our pariſh is famous for delighting in what is called *rough muſic*, conſiſting of performances on cow-horns, ſalt-boxes, warming-pans, ſheep-bells, &c. intermixed with hooting, hallowing, and all ſorts of hideous noiſes, with which the young wags of the village ſerenade their neighbours on ſeveral occaſions, particularly thoſe families, in which (as the phraſe is) the grey mare is the better horſe.

Being thus accuſtomed to noiſes in the day-time, I am frequently waked out of my ſleep (though in the abſence of my wife) by dreaming of them in the night: ſo that in almoſt all my hours of retirement, in my ſlumbers, and even in my devotions, I am conſtantly tormented with noiſes, and thoroughly convinced that there is no peace for me but in the grave.

This being my caſe, I would adviſe you, Mr. Fitz-Adam, by all poſſible means to diſcourage this raging paſſion for noiſe. If you are a married man, and have a *notable* wife (though from the freedom and ſpirit with which you write, I ſhould gueſs you to be a batchelor) you will need neither my example nor entreaties to ſet about this work in ſober ſadneſs. I am firmly perſuaded that if you can put an end to all unreaſonable noiſes, you will then have accompliſhed that univerſal reformation of ſentiments and manners, for which your paper was intended. The women will be diſcreet and lovely, and the men rational companions for their wives and one another.

After

AFTER what I have here ſaid of myſelf, I dare not let you know the firſt ſyllable of my name, or of the village where I live; but I deſire nevertheleſs to be eſteemed as your very good friend, and, though unknown,

Your moſt faithful
humble ſervant.

P. S.

I FORGOT to tell you that I have three fine girls, who, though extremely well inclined, are whipt every hour in the day, and made to pierce my ears with their cries, for not being women before their time, and as *notable* as their mamma. It had like to have eſcaped me too, that though my wife is reckoned to have the beſt times of any woman in the pariſh, it is the jeſt of the whole neighbourhood upon hearing any violent or unuſual ſcreaming, that Mrs. *** is in labour.

MR. FITZ-ADAM,

FINDING by a late paper of yours that you are an advocate for peace and quietneſs, I am encouraged, though a woman, to make known my caſe to you. I have been a ſufferer by noiſe all my life long. When I was young, I had a tender, though not a ſickly conſtitution, and was reckoned by all my acquaintance a girl of a mild and gentle diſpoſition, with abundance of good-nature. The temper of my father was unfortunately the very reverſe of mine; and though I was ready to obey the leaſt notices of his will, yet his commands were always given in ſo loud and harſh a tone of voice, that they terrified me like thunder. I have a thouſand times ſtarted from my chair, and ſtood with my knees knocking together, upon his beginning to aſk me a common queſtion. My mother, he uſed to tell me, would ruin me by her gentleneſs. Indeed ſhe was as indulgent to me as I could wiſh, and hardly ever chid me in her life, unleſs forced

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to it by my father, and to keep the peace of the family, which on various other occaſions, was frequently in danger of being broken.

At the boarding-ſchool, which I was ſent to at the uſual age, I met with a governeſs who was haſty and paſſionate; and as in her cooler hours ſhe was frequently making conceſſions to her ſcholars for the unguarded things ſhe had ſaid in her anger, ſhe loſt all her authority: ſo that having no one to fear, and no good example to follow, we were noiſy and quarrelſome all the day long.

After this I had the unhappineſs to be left an orphan to the care of my mother's brother, who was a wealthy pewterer in the city. The room we lived in was directly over the ſhop, from whence my ears were perpetually dinned with the noiſe of hammers, and the clattering of plates and diſhes. Our country houſe (where we uſually paſſed three or four months every ſummer) was built cloſe to ſome iron mills, of which my uncle was proprietor. During our ſtay at this houſe, I need not tell you how I was tormented with the horrid and tremendous noiſes which proceeded from theſe mills.

At laſt I was ſent to board with a diſtant relation, who had been captain of a man of war, but who having married a rich widow, had given up his commiſſion, and retired into the country. Unfortunately for poor me, the captain ſtill retained a paſſion for firing a great gun; and had mounted on a little fortification, that was thrown up againſt the front of his houſe, eleven nine-pounders, which were conſtantly diſcharged ten or a dozen times over, on the arrival of viſitors, and on all holidays and rejoicings. The noiſe of theſe cannon was more terrible to me than all the reſt, and would have rendered my continuance there intolerable, if a young gentleman,